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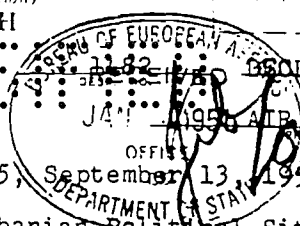
SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION

NO 34

767.00/12-2251

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : Rome
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.
REF : DRS Information Paper No. 2.35, September 13, 1951, page 1.
SUBJECT: Peripheral: Commentary on Albanian Political Situation.



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Embassy a commentary on the Albanian political situation, which was prepared in October 1951, with particular reference to the cabinet changes which were effected in September 1951. A translation of the commentary is enclosed.

The observations regarding the present "deteriorating" position of Mehmet SHEHU are of particular interest. The rivalry between Shehu and Enver HOXHA has long been a subject of comment and speculation among observers of Albanian political developments. The consensus among local Albanian refugees is that Shehu is the "strong man" of the Albanian Communist Party and Government and that Hoxha's power has been gradually waning. According to these sources, Shehu has much more ability and energy than Hoxha, whose chief attribute is his utter subservience to Moscow. It is of course possible that Shehu's position is deteriorating because he has too much ability and energy to suit the purposes of the Kremlin.

Action Requested: It is requested that the Department send copies of this despatch to the Peripheral Units at Athens, Istanbul and Trieste.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

For the Ambassador:

REVIEWED by J. S. Clark DATE 11/1/50
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Outerbridge Horsey
Counselor of Embassy

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Enclosure: AT
Translation.

REVIEWED BY J. S. Clark DATE 11/1/50
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RDS or XDS EXT. DATE 2/11/57
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Recently the following changes have been effected in the Albanian government organization:

- a) Minister of Agriculture Iliaz REKA has been succeeded by Vice President of the Council Hisni KAPO; however he remains in the same Department with the function of Vice Minister;
- b) Gogo NUSHI has been named to the post of Hisni KAPO as Vice President of the Council;
- c) Jusif PASHKO has been named Minister of Control of the State in place of Mehmet SHEHY;
- d) Bilbil KLOSI has been named Minister of Justice in place of Manush MYFTIU.

These new changes in the Albanian Government must be considered in the framework of the crisis which began in that country at the time of Tito's defection, a development which, as will be remembered, automatically placed Albania in a most delicate geopolitical position. This crisis, which seemed to have been overcome with the elimination of Koxe XHOXHE by Enver Hoxha suffered a recurrence last February following internal developments which were widely reported and commented upon in the Western press at that time. Although having had in reality much more limited proportions than one was given to believe, those developments have given, if not a clear indication of the political orientation of public opinion, certainly the definite feeling of a state of inquietude in the population and of the willingness of the Government and of the Russians to ruthlessly repress any threat to the security of the regime.

Symptomatic consequently is the fact that attacks, plots, arrests and executions continue to be accompanied by the removal of the highest officials of the State. These circumstances in fact strengthen the supposition that the Albanian crisis is far from settled and that latent dissension exists in the core of the said governing group, of which the Russians take advantage. It is very probable that, in line with this reasoning, the divergences of the governing officials must be interpreted on the one hand as the existence of non-tolerated moderate elements, and on the other hand as an ever more rigid action of the Russians designed to bind the destinies of Albania only to those whom they consider blindly loyal to their directives.

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In a less general sense, the analysis of the foregoing changes in the Albanian Government departments gives rise to the following considerations:

1) The position of Mehmet Shehy is deteriorating further after his "high" of last March, a time in which it seemed that, with the accumulation of numerous "key appointments" he could hope to displace Enver Hoxha. The Ministry of Control of the State is in fact one of the greatest importance, above all in the economic sphere, in that he who is promoted to the position has the supervision of the various state activities in accordance with the action of the Party in the various sectors of the national life.

2) The demotion of the Minister of Agriculture to the rank of Vice Minister in the same Ministry reveals the lack of sufficient experience among political figures, who have only their political loyalty and in consequence their position in the Party. Iliaz Reka is in fact a very young person only recently come to power; the man who succeeds him is, on the other hand, a person of long experience, advancing continuously for some months and formerly Vice President of the Council of Ministers together with the four other persons most prominent in the Albanian Communist Party. It is however curious that this person is being demoted from the rank of Minister to that of Vice Minister in the same Ministry; such a circumstance can only be explained by the consideration that in a dictatorial regime the personality of every citizen is obliterated and subordinated to the higher exigencies of the State and the Party.

3) Gogo Nushi, new Vice President of the Council succeeding Hisni Kapo, formerly performed trade union functions which helped to place him in the foreground as a person securely devoted to the Communist cause. His position is consequently reinforced and it is not improbable that his strict conformity could aid him to attain greater prestige.

4) The second replacement in the Ministry of Justice in the space of a few months (Manol KONOMI was purged last March) indicates the continuation of an unstable situation in judicial circles, where the severe repressions of the last months have caused perplexity and reticence. Bilbil Klosi is a new person, recently come into prominence, and therefore little is known about him; the judicial power is now in Albania also closely tied to governmental politics, and consequently it may be held as certain that, in the light of the present circumstances, the new Minister assumed the qualities and the merits

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From ROME

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which in a State of a Communist regime are given to the highest responsible authorities for the protection and the security of the party in power.

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